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Well-paid polities not turning up

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MORE than one-third of federal politicians — who are all on a base salary of \$207,100 — have skipped a day of parliament since the election, a new analysis has revealed.

Following the final sitting day of 2019, the *Sunday Herald Sun* analysed attendance data and found that despite parliament only sitting for 35 days since the May election, there was not one day when all 151 lower house MPs turned up.

Since July, 52 of them have skipped at least one sitting day in Canberra.

In the upper house, only 60 per cent of senators showed up to every sitting day.

But unlike the lower house, every senator managed to show up to work for four consecutive days during one sitting week in late November.

The data revealed there were 206 votes in the House of

Representatives since the May election. The National Party had the best attendance record, its MPs voting 97 per cent of the time.

By contrast, Queensland MP Bob Katter attended about one in three votes.

Of the 76 senators, just five Greens were present for all 271 votes in the upper house while the average among senators was 80 per cent.

Alex Antic from South Australia was the best-performing Liberal senator, attending 269 divisions since July.

Labor's Louise Pratt attended the most votes in the upper house for the Opposition, 260 of 271 divisions.

By contrast, Cabinet ministers, including Simon Birmingham and Michaelia Cash, attended less than half of all the upper house votes.

Finance Minister Mathias Cormann attended 124 of 271 divisions or 45 per cent, while Labor's Penny Wong, Leader of the Opposition in the Senate, attended just 81 votes, or 30 per cent.

The analysis excludes MPs who were ill or caring for a sick loved one. Labor MPs Amanda Rishworth and Lisa Chesters missed 16 and eight sitting days respectively but both were granted leave after having babies this year.

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